

Rhode Island Interim Assessments: Overview & Frequently Asked Questions



This guide provides an overview and FAQs for the interim assessments being developed through Race to the Top funding.

What are interim assessments?

- ◆ In general, **Interim Assessments** are assessments administered during an instructional cycle and are designed to evaluate students' knowledge and skills relative to a specific set of goals to inform decisions in the classroom and beyond. They are used between summative and formative assessments—administered periodically during an interval of instruction, oftentimes after the end of a unit or multiple times throughout a course.

What do the Rhode Island Interim Assessments include?

- ◆ **Fixed Form Assessments:** These assessments are meant to provide rich information for groups of students. They will assess student understanding of the critical areas in the Common Core throughout the year. Assessments are available for the fall, winter, and spring for mathematics and English language arts (ELA).
- ◆ **Test Construction Tool:** This tool allows educators to create various tests, quizzes, or exercises using items written to the Common Core State Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, and the Social Studies Grade Span Expectations. Within the test construction tool a user is able to select the content area, grade, and standards to assess. The tool then populates a test form with items through a guided process. Users are able to save assessments for later use.

What content will be included and how long will the tests take?

- ◆ The fixed form assessments are available for either math or ELA in grades 3-11, while the test construction tool includes test items for grades 3-11 in math, ELA, science and social studies.
 - Additional items will be added to the test construction tool item pool throughout the school year.
- ◆ The fixed form assessments in math and ELA include two sessions, each of which is estimated to take about 45 minutes to administer. Sessions can be administered within a class period, or over two different class periods depending on a school's schedule.
 - Each ELA session has 1 paired passage set, 10 multiple-choice items, 1 evidence-based selected response item, and 1 constructed response item.
 - The first math session has 12 items and there are 13 in the second session. Across both sessions there is a total of 20 multiple-choice, 2 short-answer (1 point), 2 short-answer (2 point), and 1 constructed response. For the first session calculators are not allowed, but for some grades they are allowed for the second session.
- ◆ Tests created through the test construction tool can vary in length depending on how many items are selected through the construction process. The tool provides an estimated test length at the end of the design process.

What accommodations are available for students with disabilities?

- ◆ All of the assessments will include an array of accommodations to allow for access by students, and will be available online and paper-based. Some of the online testing accommodations include, but are not limited to, magnification, answer masking, and color contrast. For more information see the test administration manual on the Interim webpage (www.ride.ri.gov/Interims) or access it through the test management system.

How are the tests scored?

For tests taken online, multiple-choice items will be scored automatically, while open-response items will be teacher-scored using the Interim Assessment scoring system.

- ◆ Paper tests must be locally scanned and uploaded into the system in order to be scored, as well as to access reports with student responses. Once they are scanned, the multiple-choice items are scored automatically, and the open-response items are available for teacher-scoring in the scoring system.
- ◆ Distributed scoring will also be available through the online system, which will allow educators to share scoring responsibilities through anonymous scoring of test items.

How will educators be trained?

- ◆ Multiple training options are available to users, including in-person training and online training materials. For more information about training, please see the Interim webpage (www.ride.ri.gov/Interims).

How will the interim assessments support districts and schools?

- ◆ The Interim Assessments enable districts, schools, and teachers to use and create locally managed interim assessments that assess the most recent standards used in Rhode Island. These assessments are a valuable tool to help teachers pinpoint areas of curriculum for which students need additional or adjusted instruction.
- ◆ The Rhode Island interim assessments will provide rapid turnaround of student results, so that instruction can be adjusted in real time—a benefit not offered by large-scale, statewide assessments.
- ◆ The primary purpose of the interim assessments is for instructional planning and monitoring purposes.

What type of information will the fixed form Interim Assessments provide? Will they provide similar information to Response-to-Intervention (RTI) or other diagnostic assessments?

- ◆ The reports provide information pertaining to students' understanding of grade-level (or content area) material. Reports include item analysis opportunities, the item text, the student response, and individual student reports, as well as summary class, school, and district reports.
- ◆ The fixed form Interim Assessments are not designed as diagnostic assessments. They are also not intended to monitor the learning rate and level of performance of struggling learners, which the RTI assessments provide. Instead, the fixed form assessments provide a broad indication of what CCSS material students may be struggling with and need further instruction around.

How are the items and assessments being developed?

- ◆ RIDE is working with Measured Progress, the vendor of the NECAP, to develop the items and assessments. Our item development processes take into consideration the PARCC Model Content frameworks and the PARCC Evidence Statements.
- ◆ Similar to the NECAP, items are reviewed by RIDE content specialists and item review committees, which are comprised of Rhode Island educators, to ensure that the items are appropriate and free of bias.

When can districts/LEAs begin implementing the interim assessments? What are the options for implementation?

- ◆ The fixed form assessments and test construction tool are available for the 2013-14 school year.
- ◆ LEAs may choose to implement either the fixed form assessments or create assessments using the test construction tool (or both). LEAs may choose to administer all three fixed form assessments within a grade/content area or they may choose to administer one or two of the assessments.

For further information on the Rhode Island Interim Assessments please visit: www.ride.ri.gov/Interims.